

The Departure of ELIJAH lamented.

A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED AT THE FUNERAL
O F T H E

REV. STEPHEN WILLIAMS, D. D.

PASTOR of a CHURCH in SPRINGFIELD.

Who departed this LIFE, June 10th, 1782,

In the Ninetieth Year of his Age.

BY ROBERT BRECK, A. M.

Pastor of the First Church in Springfield.

Help Lord for the Godly Man ceaseth.

SPRINGFIELD:

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FUNERAL SERMON,

JUNE 12th, 1782.

II. KINGS, xi. 9, 10, 11, 12.

And it came to pass when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, thou hast asked an hard thing: Nevertheless if thou see me, when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee: But if not it shall not be so—And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked, that behold there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into Heaven—And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My Father, My Father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof; and he saw him no more; and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

ELIJAH shone with distinguished lustre among the Prophets. The Jews stiled him the Prince of Prophets next after Moses. He lived in the reign of Ahab, King of Israel, who exceeded all his predecessors in wickedness, and did more to corrupt the religion

religion of the nation and promote idolatry among them, than any that had gone before him.

It was usual in times of great degeneracy, for God to raise up some eminent prophet to instruct and warn his people.

In this time of uncommon degeneracy, when the main body of the people had fallen off to idolatry, he raised up *Elijah*, and endowed him with superior gifts and inspired him with singular zeal, that he might restore the law and worship of God, which by the impiety of *Ahab* and the preceeding kings were almost abolished.

Among other means for preserving and restoring true religion, schools were erected in divers places for the instruction of youth in the knowledge of the law of God, that they might be capable of instructing others.

These schools were under the care of some eminent man of God—In *Elijah's* time they seem to have been under his care, and the scholars are called Sons of the Prophets, thus they are called divers times in the context.

Elisha who succeeded *Elijah* in the prophetic office, was a steady attendant upon him for some time before his departure—accompanied him in his travels, and assisted in his labors for the reformation of a degenerate age; and by this means became well qualified to succeed *Elijah* when he was translated to Heaven.

A little before *Elijah's* removal, *Elisha* and the sons of the prophets had some premonitions that they were soon to part with him. *Elisha* followed him

closely from place to place, whither he went to visit the schools, and give them his last instructions, and his last blessing, and would by no means be persuaded to leave him.

As these two travelled on, they at length came to the river Jordan, when upon *Elijah's* taking his mantle, and smiting the waters, they were divided hither and thither so that the two went over upon dry ground.

And now it was, when they had passed over Jordan, and drew near to the place from whence *Elijah* expected to be caught up into Heaven, that he said to *Elisha* as in the text, *Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee.* He knew he was now about to leave the world, and being desirous to do something for *One* who had been so constantly with him, and had so kindly ministered unto him, he referred it to *Elisha* to make his request.

From the miracles which he had seen *Elisha* perform, and from the success that had attended his prayers, he might suppose that *Elijah* could have procured for him any temporal blessing that he should ask, But nothing of this kind seems to have been in his thoughts—He wished for nothing better than to possess the same spirit which had so much distinguished that eminent prophet. Thus he says, *I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.* None will imagine that *Elisha* had any apprehension that it was in the power of *Elijah* to confer his spirit upon him, but though *Elijah* could not of himself answer *Elisha's* request, yet he hoped that through *Elijah's* powerful intercession with God the blessing might be obtained.

You

You take notice that *Elisha* asked a double portion of the spirit of *Elijah*. But, as Bishop Patrick observes, they are much mistaken who understand him as asking for a measure of the Spirit double to what *Elijah* himself had, but a measure double to what was bestowed on the other sons of the prophets. The expression alludes to the law which gave to the first born, a portion of his father's estate double to what was given to the other children.

To *Elisha's* request *Elijah* replies, *Thou hast asked an hard thing, a gift seldom asked and rarely bestowed, — And then he adds, Nevertheless if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee, but if not, it shall not be so; i. e.* By this sign thou shalt know whether thy request be granted.

And it came to pass as they still went on and talked, probably of the happy state to which *Elijah* was going, — and no doubt *Elisha* was very desirous to take the last instructions and advices of his master, and was putting questions to, and reverently attending to the prophet's answers — at this time we read, that there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which parted them asunder, and *Elijah* went up by a whirlwind into Heaven. An eminent divine of our own* says "The chariot and horses of fire could be only bright appearances in such distinguishing figures. And they were no doubt pure material substances which the holy angels made use of, to do the greater honour to this highly favored prophet, in his triumphant ascension." So the Bishop of Ely understands it, for thus he says, "Angels appeared before them, in the form

* Mr. PRINCE in his funeral sermon on Dr. MATHER.

of a bright chariot and horses, running towards them upon the ground, which coming between them separated them one from the other. For *Elijah* mounted the chariot, and in a great gust of wind, governed by Angels, was transported into Heaven."

When *Elisha* saw it, He cried my father my father, and adds, *the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.* He alludes to what he beheld, and very fitly compared *Elijah* to chariots and horsemen, because his piety prayers and counsels had been a surer defence than chariots and horsemen—it follows, *and he saw him no more, and took hold of his clothes and rent them in two pieces,* to express his sorrow for so great a loss.

Having taken this cursory view of the text, there are several observations which offer, worthy to be noticed and enlarged upon, upon this melancholy occasion.

I. And in the first place, we may take notice of *Elijah's* affectionate concern to procure some important blessing for *Elisha* before he left him.

Goodness and benevolence are an essential part of the religious character. You may sometimes see an appearance of devotion, without charity; but upon the authority of St. *John* we may determine, that if we don't love our brother, neither do we love God. I. *John* iv. 20.

The truly pious man feels a benevolent concern for the welfare of mankind in general—He has a more sensible solicitude for the happiness of those with whom he is immediately connected—particularly for his country, his acquaintance, his family and near friends. And his benevolence prompts him to do

them good according to his ability. He rejoices to promote their temporal interests ; but it gives him a singular pleasure to serve them in their spiritual and eternal concerns.

A desire to be useful to those around him, is a principle that steadily governs the good man in the course of his life : But this principle never operates more powerfully than when he apprehends his departure to be at hand.

Moses and *Joshua* spent their lives in serving their generation ; but their zeal seemed to kindle up and burn with fresh vigor, when their dissolution drew near. When they were admonished that they were soon to be removed, and to have no more an opportunity to inculcate upon their people that obedience upon which their happiness depended, they assembled them together, renewed their former counsels and exhortations, and exacted of them a promise that they would serve the Lord.

David in his old age prayed that he might be preserved, till he should shew God's strength to the present generation, and his righteousness unto those who were to come. Psalm lxxi, 18.

Our blessed Saviour towards the close of life, abounded more and more in prayer ; especially in his intercessions for his disciples when he was about to leave them in an evil world.

So *Elijah* says to *Elisba* in the text, *Ask what I shall do for thee before I be taken from thee*, q. d. I love thee, I wish to thee the best of blessings, can I do any thing for you, to promote your usefulness or happiness, in the short time I have to continue with you ? The consideration

consideration of the shortness of the time he had to stay here upon earth, made him more concerned to fill it up in doing good.

He visited the several schools of the Prophets, and doubtless left them his instructions and blessing, and now asks what he should do for *Elisha*. He would not lose a moment of his time, which was now become exceeding precious, by reason of its shortness.

Are you young? Let me tell you, that human life is short, *Our days on earth are as a shadow and there is no abiding.* 1 Chron. xxix, 15. You have no time to lose; no time to trifle away in folly and vanity; begin your work early, apply yourself to it diligently, that so you may finish it seasonably, and do not forget that *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.* Eccl. ix, 10.

The aged Christian may view himself, as being almost in the same situation as this prophet was---The time of his departure is at hand; this ought to be much in his thoughts; this ought to employ his daily meditations; this will quicken his endeavors to bring forth fruit in old age; his age and experience, his exemplary life and approaching death will give weight to his advices and instructions. He should enquire to whom he may do good, and what good he may do: He should be concerned to leave a sense of religion among those who are to survive him; his time should be much employed in heavenly contemplations, in humble prayers, in spiritual conversation, and in useful instructions.

My aged Brethren, we should snatch every opportunity to do good, and count ourselves happy when any

any opportunity presents wherein we can do any good before we die.

This was the case with our revered father whom God has taken from our head.

He was ever kind, humane, benevolent, ready to every good work. I never knew him decline any service, however painful and self-denying, when he saw any prospect of doing good.

But when he was grown old, and apprehended his labours to be near to an end, he doubled his diligence, and his enquiry seemed to be the same with that of the prophet *Elijah*, *What shall I do for thee before I am taken away from thee?*

And since he was grown feeble, and his bodily strength was failing, I have myself observed, that at times when he might have had assistance, he has not sought it, because, as I imagined, he was desirous to do all the good he could before he died; and I presume that his latter public services have been as profitable and acceptable as formerly, both among his own people, and in the neighbouring churches—His great age gave him special authority and he well improved it; and for some weeks past, when he considered himself as just departing, I presume that none who visited him have returned without his most affectionate blessing.

I trust his sons in the ministry, who in a body made him a visit since he was declining fast, will never forget with how much affection he committed us and our flocks to God; the advices he gave us; the fatherly blessing bestowed upon us, and the tenderness with which he took his last leave of us.

2. The next thing I shall take notice of is, secondly, *Elisha's* request to *Elijah*, *I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.*

He did not ask for worldly riches or honors; for a life of ease and pleasure; for an exemption from those troubles, dangers and persecutions which had attended his predecessor: But he asked for a double portion of that spirit of zeal and courage, wisdom and knowledge with which *Elijah* had executed his difficult office in a difficult day. He was to succeed *Elijah* in his prophetic office, he desired that through his intercession he might obtain abundant grace, for the acceptable and successful discharge of it: That like his predecessor he might be able to work miracles, in confirmation of the truth; to confront the errors and corruption of the times; to plead for religion before Kings and Princes; to endure hardships, trials and persecutions; to prevail with God in prayer, and to finish the service assigned him with approved fidelity.

This was *Elisha's* request, and it was a pious and acceptable petition; he asked the best thing he could ask; a blessing which God delights to bestow; he was called to a work of uncommon difficulty, and he requested a double portion of the prophetic spirit.

The like piety Solomon discovered, who, when God said to him, *Ask what I shall give thee*, prayed, *Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people*, whereupon God says to him, *Because this was in thy heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth or honor, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, &c. Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee,*

and I will give thee riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the Kings have had that have been before thee, &c. See 2 Chron. i, 7, and on.

Our venerable father now deceased, I have no doubt sought, and he obtained a large portion of the spirit of *Elijah*; he was a man of a truly excellent spirit; it was owing to this, that he with an unshaken fidelity, for so long a course of time, discharged the duties of the ministerial office; he was truly a pattern to the believer, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. He was a man of true zeal like *Elijah*, and did not tolerate vice of any kind; he was a friend to virtue, and an enemy to vice wherever he saw it.

Let us all of us, both ministers and people aspire after the same spirit which shone with such a lustre in him,

My Brethren, supposing our departing father had, before he left us and went to *Heaven*, said to us, as *Elijah* did to *Elisba*, ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee.

Perhaps it may not be easy, to determine what we should have asked: But it is not difficult to determine what we ought to have desired, viz. a double portion of that excellent spirit, which shone forth so brightly, in the life of this man of God; not barely a portion, but a double portion: My brethren, we ought not to content ourselves with moderate gifts and graces, but should labour to excel.

Dr. *Williams* did excel in many things but in some things more than others, and perhaps in nothing more than humility. It was undoubtedly the effect of his great modesty and humility, that when he desired

fired me to perform the service which I am now performing, he forbid me to mention his intellectual powers and acquired learning, and added, if any thing of goodness had appeared in him, it was all owing to divine grace, and he desired God might have all the glory. He had a humiliating sense of his own unprofitableness and many defects, and desired me to caution, both his brethren in the ministry and the people of his charge, not to follow him further than he had followed Christ. He ever seemed to entertain a modest humble opinion of himself, was apt to esteem others better than himself, and though desirous to do well, and stand well in the eye of the world, yet never discovered any envy or uneasiness, though others were preferred before him, on the contrary he rejoiced in the gifts, and graces of others, and was apt to think them superior to his own.

My brethren, in the ministry, and my brethren of this church and congregation, our departed father hath set before us an excellent pattern and example of an holy life. Let us follow him, but with that caution which he himself hath given us, not further than he followed Christ. May we all of us aspire after the same spirit that was in him, and seek after a double portion of it.

It is time that I came to a third note or observation, and it is this, thirdly

3. That these two pious men went on and talked.

They were soon to part and see each other no more, no wonder therefore that they spent much of their time in conversing together. The subject of their conversation is not mentioned: No doubt *Elisha* was
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eager to obtain the last advices and instructions of his departing father, and we must naturally suppose that the glorious state on which *Elijab* was that day to enter, was one principal subject of their discourse.

What sentiments and feelings would arise in the heart of one, who knew himself within a few moments of entering into heaven? Could he forbear to dwell in his thoughts and conversation upon a scene so new, so interesting, so glorious? How would he despise the world? With what pleasure would he review all his past labours and sufferings, through which he had arrived so near the gates of Heaven? How would he anticipate the joys and entertainments before him? The enjoyment of the blessed God; the society of saints and angels; the extension of his ideas; the increase of his knowledge, and his happy release from the pains and temptations of this evil world. How would he wish to infuse into those around him, the great and noble conceptions which swelled his own soul? How would he endeavour to animate others in the service of God, by communicating to them the glorious prospects which fired his own breast.

When of late I have been favored with an opportunity to converse with *our Elijab*, and heard his heavenly discourse, and observed his patience and resignation, and took notice of his firm and unshaken hope, and saw how unmov'd he was at the near approach of death, and with what calmness and serenity he met it. I could not help thinking, that I had before my eyes, the old prophet wrapt up in his mantle, just stepping into his chariot, and ready upon the wings of the wind, to take his flight to heaven.

My

My Brethren, it is worth while to live as our father *Williams* did, if it was only to die as he did.

However, in one of the last conversations I had with him, he told me that he knew nothing of the raptures and transports that some speak of; but had a firm hope of future glory, grounded wholly on the mercy of God and merits of the redeemer.

Every good man is not so near Heaven as *Elijah* was at this time, when discoursing with *Elisba*: But he is at no great distance—it is a thin partition which divides him from it, the curtain will soon be drawn up, and he will enter within the vail, whither his hope is already entered. He has some pains to endure, some labour to go through, but they will soon be over, and he will rest from his labours and his works will follow him. In times of affliction and distress, good men should animate their own and each other's hearts, by meditating and conversing upon the glorious scenes that in a few days will open upon them. *Christ*, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross and despised the shame—When the apostle *Paul* had been discoursing of *Christ*'s second coming, of the resurrection of the dead, and the glories of the future state, he directs the *Thessalonians* to comfort one another with these words. 1 Thess. iv. 18.

I now pass to observe, fourthly it is said, That as they went on and talked, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and parted them asunder, and *Elijah* went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

He enjoyed a privilege vouchsafed to only one single person before him, to be translated to heaven without seeing death. This was granted, not only

in reward of his extraordinary piety and zeal, but also in confirmation of the faith of others. Hereby they had sensible evidence of a future state, and of the faithfulness of God to bestow some distinguishing reward, on those who had distinguished themselves, by their zeal, fidelity and diligence in his service—Hereby a pledge was given us of the resurrection of the body, and of its existence in union with the soul in another world: Hereby God shewed that whatever sufferings or reproaches may befall his servants for a while, they are still under his care, and in the end shall be made glorious.—However let it be remembered, that exemption from death was peculiar to *Enoch* and *Elijah*. If *We* ever enter into heaven, we must pass thither through the gates of death; *It is appointed to all men once to die*, and death is justly stiled *the King of Terrors*, the most terrible of all terribles; the pains and agonies of a dying hour are very terrifying—the thought of being disembodied and dissolved very disagreeable—the consequences infinitely great and important. Many a good man (some for one reason and some for another) have stood shuddering upon the brink, afraid to launch out into the bottomless ocean of eternity. Let us take care so to spend our lives, as that we may have no reason to fear evil, when God shall call us to pass through the dark valley; then we shall need God's presence with us, his rod and his staff to guide and comfort us: A holy life generally issues in a peaceful death, thus the Psalmist says, *Mark the perfect man and behold the upright for the end of that man is peace.* Psalm xxxvii, 37. And the prophet says, *The work of righteousness shall be peace,*

peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. *Isaiah xxxii, 17.*

This pious father whose remains now lie before us, lived the life of the righteous, and he died his death. Many of you were acquainted with his life, and not a few of you have seen the calmness and serenity with which he entertained the summons : He was really full of peace and comfort, and seemed like one that was waiting for leave to die.

3. I must take notice of the manner in which *Elisha* was affected at parting with his head. We read in the text that *he cried my Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof, and that he took hold of his clothes and rent them.*

The presence, prayers and counsels of men eminent for their piety, are a more sure defence to a people than chariots and horsemen. *Elijah* is called *Israel's chariot and horsemen*, because he had been their security in that corrupt and degenerate time. God has often saved whole nations for the sake and in answer to the prayers of a few good men among them. If only ten righteous men had been found in *Sodom*, that city had not been destroyed ; no wonder then that when *Elisha* saw that the prophet was taken away, he did in the anguish of his heart rend his clothes, for he thought that the nation's defence was gone.

No doubt he felt his own loss—*Elijah* was his father, his head ; he leaned and depended upon him : But now he could no longer enjoy his councils ; he felt himself alone in the world ; he had not *Elijah* as heretofore, to support and strengthen him : But this was not all—*Elisha* lamented the public loss : *Elijah* had

had been *the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof*, the protection and security of the nation ; but he was now gone, alas he was gone to be seen no more ; his intercessions would no longer turn away God's anger from Israel ; his counsels would no longer guide them in their perplexities ; his reproofs would no longer check the impiety of abandoned *Abab*, who had sold himself to work wickedness ; his zeal would no longer confound the prophets of *Baal*, and restrain the progress of idolatry. Such thoughts as these we may suppose crowded into his mind, when he saw the prophet caught up. No wonder therefore that *Elifha* cried after the ascending prophet, *my Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof*, and that in the sorrow and bitterness of his soul he *rent his garments*.

And don't we feel some of the same emotions upon the translation of *our Elijah* ? Yes, I see sadness upon every countenance ; Our *Elijah* is not translated to heaven bodily ; but he is dead : The old Prophet dropt his mantle, but our father has dropt his body — His soul has taken its flight to heaven, but his body is still with us, and is soon to be deposited in the earth, there to remain, till the sound of the last trumpet shall awake his sleeping dust, and he shall arise to glory and immortality. And surely it must be a great support and comfort to us, when we are performing this last office for our pious departed friends, to consider, that *Christ* is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that sleep, and that this is the will of the father, that every one that seeth the son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and that

that *Christ* has assured us that none of them shall be lost in the grave, but that he will raise them up at the last day. *John* vi, 39, 40. Especially considering what a glorious change will be wrought in the resurrection body. The Apostle says, *It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body it is raised a spiritual body.*—And when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written,—*DEATH* is swallowed up in *VICTORY*. *1 Cor.* xv. 20, 42, 43, 44, 54. Certainly these are very comforting considerations, and it is well for us to be meditating upon them at the graves of our pious friends. We may mourn for their loss, but we ought not to sorrow as others that have no hope. We may lament our own loss; but we should not forget that our pious friends are delivered from the evils of the present world and are gone to rest.

It is an evil world that we are in and old age is peculiarly an evil day. *Moses* says, *The days of our years are three score years and ten, and if by reason of strength, they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow.* However our deceased father lived to the ninetyeth year of his age; and though he had his infirmities, yet he had a good degree of comfort, and was very useful to the last. We have therefore reason to weep, though not for him yet for ourselves and for our children. Our old prophet is dead and gone—He has for many years made up the hedge, and stood in the gap, before God, for the land, that he should not destroy

destroy it. By his removal, a wide breach is laid open : We are no more to expect his intercessions for us ; no more to enjoy his counsels ; never more to see his face, or hear his voice. His labours are at an end, and he has entered upon a blessed eternity. I may tell you with great truth and sincerity, that I bemoan my own loss ; I mourn with his bereaved family and near friends ; with the people of his charge ; with my brethren in the ministry : And I mourn for the land, and am ready to cry out *Help Lord for the Godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men.* When men eminent for their piety are taken away, it ought to be matter of general mourning. It is said that *When all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel.* Numbers xx, 29.

However we ought not to forget, what has been already suggested, that it has pleased God to spare to us our Reverend father to a very advanced age, having entered upon the 90th year of his age, and in greater part compleated the 66th year of his ministry, and what is very remarkable, his usefulness was continued to the end of life. He has been able to carry on the whole service of the Sabbath, till within a few weeks, and since that, perhaps has been no less useful, by his counsels to and blessings bestowed upon all that visited him.

I find by a memorandum which he himself gave me a few days before his death, that he was born May 14, 1693, carried captive to Canada, February 29, 1703-4 when his native town was destroyed by the French and Indians, and he did not return till Nov.

21, 1705 He suffered much in his captivity, however probably it was of advantage to him in his after life. He had his education at Harvard College, and commenced Batchelor of Arts, in 1713. and on October 17, 1716 was separated to the work of the ministry in this place : And having obtained help from God, here he has continued, testifying to all, repentance and faith, and the necessity of holiness both in heart and life ; till at length God has released him from his labours, and received him to that rest which remains for the people of God.

His preaching was sound, profitable and scriptural ; he heartily embraced the religion of our forefathers and was vary opposite to what of late is called the new divinity, as contrary to the Gospel and destructive of real religion.

You are sensible that he was divers time called abroad upon public service---first of all in 1745 he went to Louisburgh, as Chaplain to a regiment under Sir *William Pepperell*. In 1755, he went to Lake George in the same capacity, under Sir *William Johnson*, and in the year following under Gen. *Winslow*, when his health failing, he was obliged to leave the army and return home. In these services he acquitted himself with great reputation and honor, and was much respected by both officers and soldiers. He had a large and extensive acquaintance, and was much esteemed by them that knew him. In 1773 he received from Dartmouth College the highest honor which they could confer, that of Doctor of Divinity.

He was first married to Miss Abigail Davenport, and after her decease to Mrs. Sarah Burt, who survives

vives him and is his sorrowful widow. He has left seven children, the fruit of his first marriage—Three of which are now in the work of the Ministry, all of which are here present upon this melancholy occasion, together with a numerous train of grand-children.

I heartily condole with you all; with you madam—with the children, grand-children, only surviving sister, and all the near Friends of the deceased.

Your loss is great, and you may well mourn. May God support you under your affliction and sanctify it to you.—Do not forget the goodness of God in so long continuing him to you and the world: And as he when he saw death approaching, cheerfully resigned himself into the hands of God, so now he is taken away from you be ye also resigned. May a double portion of his spirit rest upon you; may you never forget his counsels, may you tread in his steps, and living as he has lived, may you after a life of service die as he has done, and be gathered to your fathers in peace.

I have now a word to say to the bereaved flock in this place, who are now as sheep without a shepherd.

My Brethren, you have enjoyed a rich blessing in Dr. Williams. He was truly a good minister of Jesus Christ, and it pleased God to continue him to you for many years, and as it was his aim to do good, I do not doubt he hath done much good among you. I am sensible that you honored and revered him, and were steady attendants upon his ministry; I hope you profited by it; if not, you have great cause of self-reflection: His service is now at an end, however, tho' he is dead, yet by me he now speaks to you: I have

my Brethren, a message to you from the dead, and it deserves your attention.

Your late venerable pastor enjoined it upon me, in his name, to charge you not to live without the ministry: but to recommend it to you, as soon as conveniently you can, to seek one to succeed him; and that you would look for one who does not deal much in matters of doubtful disputation, but one who preaches Christ, and the essential things of the Gospel—And by me he prays you to remember that you are Brethren, and to take care that you don't fall out by the way; but to seek to be at peace among yourselves.

And I pray you to take one piece of advice from me, I have observed that the hearing many candidates hath in some places been attended with unhappy consequences. Wherefore be advised to look well about you before you make your pitch, and call in some one worthy man, in whom you may hopefully unite.

And may God direct you in every step you take, and provide for you another pastor, a man after his own heart; and may a double portion of the spirit of your late pastor rest upon his successor.

I have a word and only a word further to say to my brethren in the ministry:

My Brethren, it has pleased God to remove from us our father who has been many years at our head, —We honored and esteemed him while living—he was not insensible of it, and desired me to inform you that he retained a grateful sense of the respect with which you had treated him in his advanced age,

and that he bore you and your several flocks upon his heart continually.

We have reason to lament his death and as *Elisba* did, cry *our father, our father, &c.* However it may well be a comfort to us, to consider that the God of *Elisba* still lives.—To him let us betake ourselves for wisdom and strength faithfully to discharge the duties of our office; and do not let us forget that we are hastening after our father and brethren that are gone before. Some of us are grown old, our day is far spent, the night is at hand. May the consideration hereof quicken us to the most diligent application to the great work, which our Lord and master hath committed to our hands.—And may we not only save our own souls, but be instrumental of the salvation of our hearers.

A word to the audience and I have done.

I see a great concourse of people come together, to pay their last respects to a very worthy man, and faithful minister of Jesus Christ, and to testify your sympathy with the bereaved family and flock. May the present call to this place of mourning not be lost to any of us.—May we be hereby minded of the end of all men and of our own end, It is appointed to all men once to die.—Let us realize it that we must die as well as others, and let us carefully enquire whether we are prepared for this great event.—We know not how soon it may come, and it will be an awful thing if this hour should overtake us before we are ready.

Wherefore let us give diligence that we may be found of God in peace. And while we are working out

out our salvation with fear and trembling, may God work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.

P O S T S C R I P T.

MENTION hath been made in the foregoing discourse of Dr. Williams being abundant in his blessings and counsels to them that visited him, and were about him—It may not be amiss, at the desire of his family, to insert a few words spoken to them, when he thought himself just expiring—and perhaps it may be profitable to others, as well as to his family, to hear some of the last words of this good man.

When at his desire, his family were called in to him, he looked upon them and spake as follows.

“It is a great thing to die—I must say I am afraid of dying -- I am afraid of the pangs and throes of death, for death is the wages of sin -- But I am not afraid to be dead: For I trust that through the merits, and grace of my dear Redeemer and Advocate Jesus Christ, the sting of death (which is sin) is taken away.

“And Ob! I would now tell you all, that if at the last day, you are found at the left hand of Jesus Christ, it would have been ten thousand thousand times better if you had never never had a being. I cannot add---I pray God to give you all understanding.”

After this, he was able to say very little.

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